

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 OIC-02 CIAE-00 COME-00
EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DHA-02 DODE-00
PM-04 H-01 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 /102 W
-----271907Z 013047 /46

R 271420Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4304
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY DARESSALAAM
AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TRIPOLI 0539

DEPT PASS IO FOR PALMER; SIL FOR DALE GOOD
DEPT PASS LABOR FOR SAMUELS, HOROWITZ, QUACKENBUSH, AVERY
AND LINSENMEYER

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ILO, ELAB, LY, XA
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SUBJ: SECOND DAY OF AFRICAN LABOR MINISTERS' CONFERENCE

REF: TRIPOLI 0531

SUMMARY. AFRICAN LABOR CONFERENCE DELEGATES ADOPT
AGENDA, EXCLUDE LIBYAN PROPOSAL FOR INCLUSION OF
DEBATE ON ANTI-ZIONISM. LIBYAN DELEGATION CHARGES

THAT "IMPERIALIST AGENTS" ACTIVITIES IN CORRIDORS OF CONFERENCE PERSUADED DELEGATES TO REJECT THEIR PROPOSAL. CONFERENCE'S POOR ORGANIZATION GENERATES SCATHING CRITICISM FROM DELEGATES. DISCUSSION OF CREATION OF AFRICAN LABOR UNION ONLY ITEM COVERED IN TWO DAYS OF MEETING. COMMENTS OF DELEGATES SUGGEST ITS CREATION WILL BE POSTPONED, IF NOT FORGOTTEN. DELEGATES DISCUSSION INTERRUPTED BY UNSCHEDULED VISIT OF QADHAFI. END SUMMARY.

1. AFTER BRIEF DEBATE MORNING OF APRIL 26, AFRICAN DELEGATES ATTENDING THE SECOND ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY LABOR COMMISSION ADOPTED CONFERENCE'S AGENDA. DELEGATES REJECTED ADDITION TO AGENDA OF LIBYAN GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL THAT ZIONISM AS RACISM BE DISCUSSED DURING CONFERENCE. LIBYAN PRESIDENT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICA TRADE UNION UNITY ALI NEFASHI VOICED LIBYA'S CHAGRIN AT REJECTION OF THE ANTI-ZIONIST PROPOSAL. NEFASHI MADE ACCUSATION THAT PROPOSAL WAS REJECTED AS A RESULT OF ACTIVITIES OF "IMPERIALIST AGENTS" IN THE CORRIDORS OF THE CONFERENCE HALL. (THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE OAU SECRETARIAT REJECTED THE LIBYAN PROPOSAL BECAUSE IT HAD NOT BEEN PRESENTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE ORGANIZATION'S CHARTER AND RULES OF PROCEDURE.) ELECTION OF THE LIBYAN CHAIRMAN, WHO CUSTOMARILY IS THE MINISTER OF LABOR FOR THE HOST COUNTRY, WAS THE ONLY OTHER PROGRESS MADE BY DELEGATES DURING ITS SECOND DAY

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OF MEETINGS. ENTIRE MORNING SESSION WAS DEVOTED TO CRITICISM OF THE ORGANIZATION'S ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARIAT. DELEGATES FROM ALGIERS, UGANDA, MAURITIUS, LIBERIA, SUDAN AND ZAIRE CRITICIZED THE SECRETARIAT FOR ITS POOR PREPARATION OF THE CONFERENCE, PARTICULARLY THE ABSENCE OF WORKING DOCUMENTS IN FRENCH. THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY GENERAL ANSWERED HIS CRITICS EXPLAINING THAT THE ORGANIZATION HAD A VERY SMALL BUDGET AND AN INCREASING WORKLOAD. HE SAID THE SECRETARIAT COULD NOT PREPARE ALL THE DOCUMENTS IN ADVANCE OF THIS CONFERENCE, NOR FOR THAT MATTER, FOR THE NEXT MEETING OF THE ORGANIZATION IN THE FIRST WEEK OF MAY IN ADDIS ABABA. ABSENCE OF WORKING PAPER DURING AFTERNOON SESSION PROVOKED SCATHING CRITICISM FROM ZAMBIAN REPRESENTATIVE WHO POINTED OUT TO DELEGATES THAT AFTER TWO DAYS OF DISCUSSION NOT ONE ITEM ON THE AGENDA HAD BEEN VOTED UPON. THE ZAMBIAN REPRESENTATIVE ASKED THE LIBYAN CHAIRMAN "HOW LONG ARE WE GOING TO SIT HERE

DOING NOTHING." THE AFRICAN DELEGATES' FRUSTRATION WITH THE LIBYAN CHAIRMAN, MINISTER OF LABOR HUMAMMAD AL TAHIR AL MAHUB, BECAME EVEN GREATER WHEN HE SUGGESTED THAT DEBATE ON AGENDA ITEMS BE PUT ASIDE IN THE ABSENCE OF THE DOCUMENTS IN THE FRENCH LANGUAGE. WITHIN SECONDS OF HIS ORIGINAL PROPOSAL HE SUGGESTED THAT THE DELEGATES DISCUSS THOSE ITEMS FOR WHICH ALL THE DELEGATES HAD DOCUMENTS. MAURITIUS LABOR MINISTER OBJECTED TO THE PROPOSAL AND ASKED MAJHUB UNDER WHAT KIND OF RULES OF PROCEDURE THE CONFERENCE WAS OPERATING. FLUSTERED LIBYAN CHAIRMAN THEN RECOGNIZED EGYPTIAN REPRESENTATIVE'S REQUEST TO SPEAK. RELIZING WHOM HE HAD RECOGNIZED, HE PREVENTED QUICKLY THE EGYPTIAN FROM SPEAKING BY RECOGNIZING DELEGATE FROM ZAIRE.

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2. AFTER MORE THAN AN HOUR OF ACRIMONIOUS DEBATE ON WHAT TO DISCUSS, DELERATES AGREED UPON FIFTH ITEM OF AGENDA - CREATION OF AN AFRICAN LABOR ORGANIZATION. OAU LABOR COMMISSION SECRETARY GENERAL INTRODUCED DEBATE WITH BACKGROUND REMARKS ON THE HISTORY OF THE QUESTION OF CREATING AN AFRICAN LABOR ORGANIZATION. CONFIDENTIAL

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HE INDICATED QUESTION WAS ORIGINALLY RAISED DURING MARCH 1974 AFRICAN LABOR MINISTERS' CONFERENCE IN CONAKRY. MINISTERS DECIDED THERE WAS NEED FOR AN AFRICAN LABOR ORGANIZATION BECAUSE OF THE IMPASSE THEY FELT THEY HAD REACHED IN THE ILO. THE LIBYAN DELEGATION TO THE CONAKRY CONFERENCE PROPOSED THAT AFRICANS SUSPEND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO ILO AND CREATE A NEW ORGANIZATION. THE OAU LABOR SECRETARY GENERAL TOLD THE DELEGATES THAT FIVE UNSPECIFIED OAU MEMBER STATES SUBSEQUENTLY SUBMITTED VIEWS ON QUESTION OF AN AFRICAN LABOR ORGANIZATION. THEIR VIEWS INDICATED THAT ITS CREATION WOULD BE PREMATURE BECAUSE THERE WERE PRESENTLY SUFFICIENT FORUMS IN WHICH AFRICANS COULD DISCUSS THEIR PROBLEMS. NOR DID THE STATES BELIEVE THAT THE ORGANIZATION FOR AFRICAN TRADE UNION UNITY WOULD BE AN APPROPRIATE ORGANIZATION FOR REPRESENTING AFRICAN LABOR PROBLEMS BECAUSE THE ORGANIZATION BARRED AFRICAN EMPLOYERS AS MEMBERS.

3. THE LIBYAN CHAIRMAN, WHO NORMALLY WOULD HAVE INITIATED THE DISCUSSION, DECLINED STATING "THAT LIBYA WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO TAKE THE FLOOR." THE ZAMBIAN DELEGATE VOICED HIS GOVERNMENT'S OBJECTION TO THE CREATION OF INDEPENDENT AFRICAN LABOR ORGANIZATION. HE ASKED "WHY WAS IT NECESSARY AND HOW MANY ORGANIZATIONS DOES AFRICA NEED." HE TOLD HIS COLLEAGUES THAT THE PRESENT ORGANIZATION FOR AFRICAN UNITY LABOR COMMISSION EXISTED ONLY BECAUSE OF THE CHARITY OF SUCH COUNTRIES AS LIBYA. HE CHIDED THE PROPONENTS OF A NEW ORGANIZATION BY POINTING OUT THAT LABOR COMMISSION TODAY CANNOT FUND ONE PROJECT IN AFRICA, NOR CAN ITS MEMBER STATES PAY THEIR DUES IN THE MANY ORGANIZATIONS TO WHICH THEY PRESENTLY BELONG. THE ZAMBIAN DELEGATE WARNED THE PARTICIPANTS THAT A SPLIT WITH THE ILO MEANT THAT THE AFRICAN STATES WOULD LOSE THE ILO'S TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WHICH PRESENTLY CONSTITUTES 50 PERCENT OF ITS CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTIVITIES. ZAMBIAN DELEGATE SUGGESTED IT WAS FOLLY TO SPEAK OF YET ANOTHER ORGANIZATION. HE SUGGESTED THAT DELEGATES TAKE STOCK OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES IN EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS. THE ZAMBIAN'S REMARKS WERE GREETED WITH AN ENTHUSIASTIC APPLAUSE BY DELEGATES.

4. UGANDAN DELEGATE ECHOED SENTIMENTS OF ZAMBIA AND ZAIRE THAT THERE WERE SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS. HOWEVER, DELEGATES FROM SOMALI AND MALI DEFENDED THE NEED FOR A NEW AFRICAN LABOR ORGANIZATION. THE MALI DELEGATE ARGUED THAT A NEW ORGANIZATION WOULD FAIL IF IT MODELED THE PRESENT ILO STRUCTURE WHICH DID NOT ADDRESS ITSELF TO THE REAL NEEDS OF THE AFRICAN PEOPLE. SIERRE LEONE MINISTER OF LABOR WARNED DELEGATES THAT THEY SHOULD DISCUSS ISSUE IN MUCH GREATER DETAIL THEN PRESENT CONFERENCE ALLOWS. HE INDICATED THAT THERE WAS A NEED FOR AN AFRICAN FORUM TO DISCUSS AFRICA'S PROBLEMS, BUT THE DELEGATES SHOULD NOT COMPLAIN ABOUT THEIR NON-PARTICIPATION IN DECISIONS MADE BY THE ILO'S GOVERNING BODY, IF THEY WERE NOT PREPARED TO PARTICIPATE IN MEANING DEBATE ON SUCH AN IMPORTANT QUESTION.

5. COMMENT: CONFERENCE'S MOST SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENT THUS FAR WAS DELEGATES' REJECTION OF LIBYAN PROPOSAL TO RENEW DISCUSSION ON ZIONISM AS RACISM. LIBYANS WERE ANGERED THAT DELEGATES DID NOT RETURN THEIR GENEROSITY BY ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL. CONFERENCE BILL, INCLUDING TRANSPORTATION OF DELEGATES TO TRIPOLI, BEING PAID BY LIBYAN GOVERNMENT. BLUNDERING INEPTITUDE OF LIBYAN CHAIRMAN ONLY FURTHER ALIENATING DELEGATES RESULTING IN EVEN LESS RESPONSE TO LIBYAN OVERTURES.
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